



Missouri Women Veterans News



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Editor's Note: If you missed Women Veterans Week in Branson, you missed a great time of sharing with other Women Veterans from all over the US. I met some neat Veterans from MN, TN, OK, TX, Washington DC, CA, FL, KS, IN, and of course MO. BG Wilma Vaught was awesome and everyone had fun at the banquet. Mark your Calendars for next years event which is always the 3rd week in May. The NASWVC conference in Reno was another successful event with the best training a Veterans representative could ask for. Next years conference is going to be held in our home State of Missouri, so if at all possible, plan to attend. There are speakers from Washington DC that bring the latest updates on Women Veterans benefits and these conference's could come out of your training budgets. So Branson, May 15-17, 2007. Don't forget! Remember this newsletter is here for you, so if you have any upcoming events you think would be of interest to your fellow Women Veteran, send them in, so I can include them in our next issue, which will be out in October.

Women's Veterans Conference, Reno

The National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators (NASWVC) held their 7th annual conference in Reno, NV May 30- June 3, 2006. NASWVC is a growing organization that started in Oklahoma. It was a dream of our founder Lynda Waldroop. Lynda states "The purpose of starting this organization was to create a network that would reach out to women veterans so that they would know they are veterans and where and how to apply for their benefits. Now we have women veteran coordinators in almost every state and our presence is felt Washington D.C." All but 6 states now have women veteran state coordinators and 35 state coordinators attended the conference along with several representatives from Washington D.C. Most State Coordinators have full time position and this is a collateral assignment for us. However, it is one we take seriously and each coordinator is dedicated to finding our women veterans and making sure they know that they are veterans and that they too are entitled to benefits the same as male veterans. President Delilah Washburn and other members of the executive committee have made several trips to D.C., have met President Bush, and are ensuring that NASWVC is known on Capital Hill. NASWVC is continuously fighting for improvement to the VA for its female veterans. Little things like, a curtain on an exam table so that if the door opens a women feels more privacy, to major things like service connected benefits for mastectomies and hysterectomies. Some of the major points discussed at the conference were; The DOD now has restrictive and non-restrictive reporting for personal and military Sexual trauma. The restrictive does not activate an investigation, it allows for medical and mental treatment, is confidential, the service person is given a copy of the report for their records and it can be switched to a non-restrictive within one year. This is done so that the service member can come forward and have it documented without fear of retaliation by co-workers or superiors. Public Law 108-422 permanently extended VA's authority to provide counseling, treatment, and care to victims of military sexual assault. Also there are Women Veteran Program Managers at each medical facility & Women Veteran Coordinators at each VARO. Our women veterans are seeking care for blast injuries, readjustment issues; the impact of witnessing death and injuries, and to date we now have 11 women amputees. DOD is working hand in hand with the VA under the seamless transition program, where injured veterans move from active duty facilities to VA facilities. VHA now has 4 Polytrauma Centers for the more severely wounded soldiers. They are located in Richmond, Tampa, Palo Alto, and Minneapolis. Many other ideas were discussed at the conference. Next years conference will be here in our home state at Branson. The dates are May 15-17, 2007.



Women in Uniform PRESENT PAST

A1C Megan Baker

I joined the United States Air Force on November 16, 2004 for a 4 year enlistment. I graduated from basic training at Lackland AFB, TX with honors. After basic

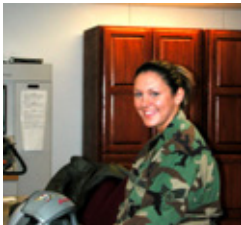


I went to Keesler AFB, MS for tech school. I graduated from there with academic excellence. I am currently serving at my first duty station which is at Whiteman AFB, MO. I work in financial management. My duties

include processing military pay and travel pay documents for Active Duty and Reserve members. I joined the AF because I have always had a desire to serve my country. I am from Salem, IL. I plan on re-enlisting and eventually retiring from the Air Force. I hope to serve overseas sometime in the future. Whiteman Air Force base is excellent place to be stationed. There are a lot of things to do within the surrounding area. Whiteman is located about an hour from Kansas City. For me it happens to be close to home which makes it a great place to raise my family.

SRA Julie Hicks

I started my Air Force career on September of 2002, Stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base, MO. I'm also working on getting two bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice and Psychology. My job is Air crew Life Support, located in an A-10 Fighter Squadron. My



job has many important responsibilities. I'm responsible for: inspecting, and maintaining life support equipment, such as the pilots' g-suits, harness, oxygen masks, helmets', parachutes, and survival kits. In my job we train the pilots how to survive if they have to eject from

the aircraft, which includes water survival, and ground survival training. It's a very hands on job. Basically, we're responsible for saving the pilot's life.

Being in the Military has been a dream of mine ever since I was a little girl. I've had a good experience serving in the Military so far and look forward to becoming an officer some day.

Mary Pogue Jahm

I enlisted in the Navy on my 20th birthday, December 1948. At that time 2 recruits would be accepted from each state. I was the first regular



Navy enlistee from my home town of Duluth, MN. I reported to Great Lakes Naval Base for Boot Camp on 14 Feb. 1949. After boot camp I was accepted to Telematic School at Norfolk, VA Naval Base learning to operate teletype machines. After completing Telematic School in September 1949, I was

stationed at NAS Corpus Christi, TX in the communications division. When the Korean War started in June 1950, I received orders for ComServPac, Pearl Harbor, HI and was shipped out in 24 hours to USNB Treasure Island, CA. So many men were transferred that all Military transportation was booked solid and the 48 Navy Women awaiting transfer were booked aboard the Mattson Cruise Ship, Lurline, for a 5 day cruise from San Francisco to Honolulu, HI. 48 Navy women amongst 500 vacation passengers who really spoiled us. At ComServPac I was a secretary in the Communications Division. After 6 months I requested a transfer to the CinCPac Crypto Dept. where I worked for the remainder of my 2 years duty there. My return to the mainland was another special trip. I flew back on the last Martin Mariner seaplane still in service. My next station was the communications office at the Naval Supply Depot at Naval Base Norfolk, VA. My position there was supervisor of 20 personnel maintaining a 24 hour operation of watches sending and receiving shipping orders for supplies to the fleet. My service time gave me a good work ethic, cooperation and handling whatever challenge I was faced with. In 1979, WAVES National, a national organization of former Navy women, was formed and I was elected its first National President in 1980. I spent 12 years in various positions in Waves National. St. Louis has a Unit, Gateway WAVES with about 45 members. At the present time, my husband and I maintain the national records for the National Navy Chiefs organization. I consider my Navy service as a very rewarding and special time of my life.



SAY WHAT?

The VA uses a lot of acronyms, so we have put together a list of the most frequently used ones for your information:

VARO: VA Regional Office
VAMC: VA Medical Center
CBOC: Community Based Outpatient Clinic
PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
BVA: Board of Veterans Appeals
DTA: Duty to Assist
VSO: Veteran Service Officer
NPRC: National Personnel Record Center
VSR: Veterans Service Representative
DOD: Department of Defense

A&A: Aid and Attendance
RMC: Records Management Center
HB: Housebound
NSC: Non service connected
SC: Service connected
AGO: Adjutant General Office
DRO: Decision Review Officer
MVC: Missouri Veterans Commission
DIC: Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

WOMEN MEMORIAL WASHINGTON D.C.

The Women in Military Service for America Memorial, at the ceremonial entrance to Arlington National Cemetery, is the nation's only major national memorial honoring all women who have defended America throughout history. Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, USAF, Retired, is the President of the Board of Directors. She is a very active President and travels all around the United States to promote this Memorial. BG Vaught recently attended the Women Veterans Week in Branson and she also was at the National Association of State Women Coordinators in Reno. BG Vaught is asking all WOMEN to please come forward and send in your military service information to the Memorial so that a record of your service to your country can be recorded for all time. Your information will be entered into the "Register" which is the Memorial's computerized, interactive database that records for history, the name, service information, photograph and memorable experience of each registered woman. If you have ever served in the Military, please contact the Memorial at 800-222-2294 or go on line at www.womensmemorial.org.



Brigadier General Wilma Vaught

"Let the generations know that the women in uniform guaranteed their freedom."

Anne S. (Sosh) Brehm
1LT, USA NC, World War II



Ask Karen



Q. My son is currently serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. This time he has many more female soldiers in his unit. There are several that do not receive much mail and very few care packages. Other than the typical snacks and care package items I send for my son, what can I send that would be appreciated by the female soldiers?

Submitted by Army Mom, Branson Missouri

A. The feed back I am getting is that they need hygiene supplies. Our soldiers have to serve on human waste burning details, they are living in tents in the blowing sand and have lizards, spiders and snakes as pets. Due to the very primitive living conditions (the heat, causing non-stop sweating & lack of modern bathrooms) many of our military women get yeast infections, so any over the counter creams like Monistat would be very much appreciated.

Q. Can the PX be used by anyone who served in the service, or do you have to have been in the service so many years? I was in for three years and there is a PX with food and shops near me, and I want to know if I qualify to go there, and if so, what proof do they need from me. Women Veterans were never given a card.

Submitted by Mary Slivka

A. Unfortunately the answer is no. There are some women veterans (like myself) who are also dependents of military retiree's and we can use those facilities under our dependent status. Our guard and reserve women can use it the same as our active duty women. Unless you are a veteran who is 100% service connected or a military retiree yourself, you will not be able to use the PX.

DID YOU KNOW:

✓ That as a Veteran you are entitled to a VA grave marker in a private cemetery or if your ashes are not buried or your body never recovered, you can have a marker in the National or State Cemetery if you have not used your government marker in a private cemetery.

✓ There is a housebound/aid & attendance rate to 100% S/C, DIC and pension.

✓ That there is a home loan guarantee for veterans.

✓ That a service-connected (S/C) disability does not have to be a result of combat.

✓ That Veterans who serve at least 1 day during a declared war time frame, may be entitled to pension if over 65, or permanently and totally disabled.

✓ That Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) has Veteran service officers in almost every county to answer your questions about benefits and will assist you in applying for them.

✓ That women who's 1st husbands were KIA may be entitled to have their benefits restored if there current husband is deceased, even if they are drawing benefits from their own service.

✓ If you are rated 100% S/C your dependents can qualify for VA benefits.

✓ If you are medically discharged with severance pay- you must file for **VA** comp to begin the recoupment of your severance pay. VA compensation is not paid until the severance has been recouped, or your initial rating has been given a higher rating.



Upcoming Events

VETERANS BENEFITS FAIR SCHEDULE

July 15, 2006, Joplin

September 23, 2006, O'Fallon, Renaud Spirit Center

Visit our web site for times and locations of these and other Veterans Benefits Fairs: www.mvc.dps.mo.gov

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS EVENT, AUGUST 5, 2006

JEFFERSON CITY MISSOURI STATE CAPITAL

Join us to see The Marine Corps Silent Drill Team
From Washington, DC at 6 PM. A Veterans Service
Officer will be available 4 to 6 PM.

1993 Lieutenant Shannon Workman, USN, became the first woman pilot to qualify for night-landing on a carrier.

Women's Memorial

The Missouri State Fair

The Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) will have an information booth again this year at the State Fair in Sedalia. The Fair dates are August 10-20, 2006. MVC's booth will be located in the Exhibition Center near the main ticket office and will be manned from 9am to 8pm each day of the fair. The State Women Veterans Coordinator will be there on Aug 12 from 3-8pm and Aug 13 from 9am-2pm. Military Appreciation day for the Fair will be on Aug 15. Last year one of our Veterans Service Supervisors' visited with a widow who happened to stop. She had no idea she was entitled to VA benefits. She was given information about benefits, given a name of a Veterans Service Officer for her area and highly encouraged to file as soon as possible. She did and is now drawing VA death pension benefits. So you never know where you are going to learn about benefits. Stop by, we will be happy to visit with you.

1989 Master Chief Janice Ayers, USN, was the first woman assigned as Command Master Chief at sea.

Women's Memorial

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www.mvc.dps.mo.gov



State of Missouri Women Veterans

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____

Email address: _____

Birth date: _____ / _____ / _____
Day Month Year

Place of Birth _____
City/State

Service (Circle one) USA USMC USN USAF OTHER _____

Service dates: From _____ To _____
From _____ To _____

Receiving VA or Medical Benefits: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____ (i.e. pension, comp., medical, etc.)

Have received benefits in the past: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____

Would you like a veteran's Service Officer in your local area to contact you to explain your
Potential benefits? Yes _____ No _____

To receive your free Woman Veteran State Sticker

Return this to: Missouri Veterans Commission/Karen Etzler

Women Veterans Coordinator/VSO

525 Jules, Room 320

St. Joseph, MO 64501

816/387-2841

or send a request via email to: Karen.Etzler@mvc.dps.mo.gov